

VZCZCXRO4918
OO RUEHFL RUEHKW RUEHLA RUEHROV RUEHSR
DE RUEHWR #0974 2331520
ZNY CCCCC ZZH
O 201520Z AUG 08
FM AMEMBASSY WARSAW
TO RUEHC/SECSTATE WASHDC IMMEDIATE 6911
INFO RUEHZL/EUROPEAN POLITICAL COLLECTIVE IMMEDIATE
RUEKJCS/JOINT STAFF WASHINGTON DC IMMEDIATE
RUEKJCS/SECDEF WASHINGTON DC IMMEDIATE
RHEHNSC/NSC WASHDC IMMEDIATE
RHMFISS/CDR USEUCOM VAIHINGEN GE IMMEDIATE

C O N F I D E N T I A L WARSAW 000974

SIPDIS

STATE FOR PM, EUR AND ISN
SECDEF FOR DASD FATA
EUCOM FOR EC-J5

E.O. 12958: DECL: 08/20/2018
TAGS: [PREL](#) [MARR](#) [MASS](#) [MCAP](#) [PL](#)
SUBJECT: POLAND: SECRETARY RICE, FM SIKORSKI SIGN MISSILE
DEFENSE AGREEMENT

REF: WARSAW 963

Classified By: Ambassador Victor H. Ashe by reason 1.4 (b and d)

1.(SBU) On August 20, the Secretary and Polish Foreign Minister Radek Sikorski signed the Ballistic Missile Defense Agreement, accompanied by the issuance of a bilateral Declaration of Strategic Cooperation. The signing ceremony, which took place at the Prime Minister's chancellery, was covered live by Polish television. In a dramatic and unusual show of Polish solidarity, both President Kaczynski and Prime Minister Donald Tusk joined the Secretary in making public remarks. At the request of the Polish Government, the declaration was made public in both capitals at the time of the signing. The GoP will enter the agreement in its public record within a few days, as part of the ratification process.

12. (SBU) Prime Minister Tusk, speaking for the first time publicly in English for part of his remarks, described the "hard but friendly" negotiations that produced an agreement which will make Poland and the U.S. more secure. Tusk said the U.S. and Poland will work together to counter military and non-military threats, and will conclude a series of agreements concerning cooperation on defense, defense industry, research and development and information-sharing. Tusk also thanked President Kaczynski for his efforts on behalf of the Agreement. The President thanked the current and previous governments for their work during negotiations. As the Prime Minister stood stone-faced, Kaczynski thanked former Polish negotiator Wytold Waszczykowski, recently fired by the Prime Minister for allegedly damaging the Polish negotiating position with his public criticism of the government's approach to the talks. The Secretary described the friendly and purposeful talks which had produced an agreement that further deepens the bilateral relationship and enhances European and U.S. security. She emphasized that in troubled times, it is important to have friends who share the same values and aspirations.

13. (SBU) As post anticipated, public support for the MD agreement continues to climb. According to a poll published in today's edition of "Gazeta Wyborcza," 63 percent of respondents approve of the decision to deploy MD interceptors in Poland, as compared to early July polls, when a majority of those with formed opinions disapproved of MD. The growing public support for the agreement reflects both the strong endorsement from Prime Minister Tusk (by far Poland's most popular politician) and the scare effect from recent Russian actions in Georgia. More than anytime in the past four years, Poles seem ready for a closer strategic partnership with the U.S.

14. (C) There has been much speculation in the press about the upcoming ratification process, but Polish leaders seem committed to speedy action. The Prime Minister assured the Secretary ratification of the BMDA would not be a problem and would be achieved "quickly." He also offered to be in contact with the Czech Prime Minister to encourage their ratification process along. Defense Minister Klich expressed confidence to the Secretary that the GoP would move forward quickly to negotiate the bilateral SOFA with the U.S. President Kaczynski went on public record August 19 also in favor of speedy ratification. Given the level of support for the agreement between the Prime Minister's party (PO), PO coalition partner PSL, and the President's opposition party (PiS), ratification is as close to certain as it could be.
ASHE